

# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

## **Monterey, California**



## **THESIS**

**THE RISE AND THE FALL OF TERRORIST  
ORGANIZATIONS IN POST-DICTATORIAL GREECE:  
THE ROLE AND THE LESSONS FOR THE  
INTELLIGENCE SERVICES**

by

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**THE RISE AND THE FALL OF TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS IN POST-DICTATORIAL GREECE: THE ROLE AND THE LESSONS FOR THE INTELLIGENCE SERVICES**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Greek government unsuccessfully battled leftist terrorist groups from 1975 to 2002. The two most notorious terrorist organizations during this period were the “November 17” group and another group called, “Revolutionary People’s Struggle.” In 1975, these organizations began a violent campaign against the United States, NATO personnel, Turkish diplomats, and member of the Greek political and business elite.

The government’s failure to curtail these groups resulted from the erroneous belief that these terrorists were not a direct threat to Greek’s democracy. Fortunately, in June of 2002, with numerous arrests, Greek authorities made substantial progress and apprehended the leaders of the “November 17.”

This thesis examines the nature and the effects of terrorism by focusing on the ideology and activities of these two specific terrorist groups. This thesis also identifies and analyzes the origins of these organizations, reveals how the terrorist situation was created, and examines the causes that led to the inception of these terrorist organizations.

Additionally, this thesis interprets the intelligence services in Greece before and after the demise of the Greek military dictatorship in 1974. It also explores how the intelligent community under the watchful eye of Greece’s political leadership helped dislodge these terrorist organizations and helped protect and consolidate the fledging democracy.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS IN GREECE .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>DEFINITIONS OF TERROR AND TERRORISM .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>HISTORICAL, SOCIO-POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>D.</b>	<b>NATURE AND GOALS OF THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS ....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>E.</b>	<b>DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATIONAL PHASES OF THE GROUPS.....</b>	<b>15</b>
1.	Phase One: 1975 to 1980.....	15
2.	Phase Two: 1983 to 1990 .....	16
3.	Phase Three: 1990 to 2002.....	19
<b>III.</b>	<b>RESPONSE OF GREEK STATE TO TERRORISM.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>POLICIES AGAINST TERRORISM.....</b>	<b>24</b>
1.	Ceasefires and Negotiations with the Terrorists .....	25
2.	Improving Economic Conditions.....	25
3.	Making Reforms.....	26
4.	Collective Punishments.....	26
5.	Emergency Powers and Other Anti-Terrorist Legislation.....	26
6.	Use of Security Forces .....	27
<b>C.</b>	<b>THE REASONS FOR THE DECLINE OF TERRORISM.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>D.</b>	<b>GREEK RESPONSE TO TERRORISM .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>INTELLIGENCE SERVICES IN GREECE IN THE POST-DICTATORIAL ERA .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF THE INTELLIGENCE SERVICE .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>MISSION OF THE INTELLIGENCE SERVICE .....</b>	<b>37</b>
1.	Requirements.....	38
2.	Collection .....	38
3.	Process and Exploitation .....	38
4.	Analysis and Production .....	38
5.	Dissemination .....	38
6.	Consumption .....	39
7.	Feedback .....	39
<b>D.</b>	<b>STRUCTURE OF THE NIS .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>E.</b>	<b>LEGAL FRAMEWORK.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>THE ROLE AND THE LESSONS OF INTELLIGENCE IN GREECE DURING THE WAR ON TERRORISM .....</b>	<b>41</b>

A.	CONTROL AND OVERSIGHT OF THE INTELLIGENCE SERVICES.....	41
B.	THE ROLE OF INTELLIGENCE .....	43
C.	THE NEED FOR INTELLIGENCE.....	44
D.	THE ROLE OF INTELLIGENCE AGAINST THE TERRORISTS.....	46
VI.	CONCLUSION .....	55
	INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST .....	59

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Killing a man is murder unless you do it to the sounds of trumpets.<sup>1</sup>

-Voltaire

After almost three decades of minimal success at combating leftist terrorists, Greek authorities finally made headway against November 17 (17 N) in the summer of 2002. A failed bombing attack in the port of Pireaus led Greek police to their first arrest of a November 17 member. Furthermore, in February 2003, the Greek police arrested members of the other major terrorist group in Greece, the Revolutionary People's Struggle (ELA).

How did such progress occur? Was it good fortune and coincidence or was it the result of highly professional efforts of the Greek authorities? For a better understanding, many questions must be answered. What are the origins and the historical background of those terrorist groups? What were the goals of 17 N and ELA, and what were they trying to prove? What was the response of the Greek state and its resulting legislative changes? What are the mission and the legal framework of the Greek Intelligence Services? What are the problems that are likely to emerge in a democratic country during the transition from an authoritarian regime to a consolidated democracy, as happened with Greece after Colonel George Papadopoulos' dictatorship? What have the Intelligence Services learned from that conflict?

All these questions must be answered to understand the deeper reasons for the success of the Greek authorities and the role that the Greek and foreign intelligence and security services played in dislocating those terrorist groups in that undeclared war on terrorism.

This thesis examines the nature and the effects of terrorism by focusing mainly on the ideology and the activities of the revolutionary organization November 17 and the Revolutionary People's Struggle, Greece's most well-known terrorist organizations, which in 1975, started a violent campaign against the United States and North Atlantic

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<sup>1</sup> George Kassimeris, *Europe's Last Red Terrorists: The Revolutionary Organization 17 November*, New York University Press, 2001, p. 1.

Treaty Organization personnel, Turkish diplomats, and members of the Greek political and business elite. The thesis identifies and analyzes the origins of those organizations, shows how the current situation was created, and explains the reasons these terrorist groups formed. Additionally, the thesis examines the role of the intelligence services in Greece after the Colonels' dictatorship in that fragile transition from an authoritarian regime to a democracy, their role in uprooting those organizations and the lessons that the intelligence services have learned in battling the urban terrorists to protect and to consolidate the democracy.

The organization November 17 is responsible for 23 assassinations and over 140 attacks, including mortar assaults, drive-by shootings and detonating of explosives. The two acts that have had the most defining impact were 17 N's first and last assassinations: the 1975 murder of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Athens station chief, Richard Welch; and the 2000 killing of the British military attaché, Brigadier Stephen Saunders.

Between 1975 and July 2002, there were no breakthroughs, let alone criminal convictions, related to the numerous 17 N operations in Greece. Despite international attempts to help Greek authorities solve the 17 N crimes, the group remained an enigma for 27 years. Given the group's changing dynamics since the early 1990s, and the political pressures on the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) leadership to take a more serious stance against 17 N, many people wondered whether the current wave of arrests and the evidence that emerged resulted from pure luck or coincidence.

Furthermore, the September 11<sup>th</sup> tragedy in the U.S. revealed the broadness of the terrorist threats. That date also demonstrated the vulnerability not only of the U.S., but also of the rest the world. Security issues have become global and Greece has the responsibility to play a significant role in that important battlefield. For almost thirty years, Greece's achievements were extremely deficient while the operations of the terrorist groups in Greece were quite successful. The help of the intelligence services in that battle was important and significant.

Chapter I presents the historical background of the problem and the definition of terrorism. These terrorists groups, known or unknown to the public, engage in mutual relations, which makes them more capable, yet which also makes them more vulnerable to the police and intelligence services.

Therefore, exploring the origins of these terrorist organizations, their historical background, and the socio-political environment that fosters them is imperative. Moreover, their ideology must be examined in order to understand their existence clearly. Furthermore, the kinds of attacks they chose and their ultimate goals must be understood to avoid their reestablishment. Based on the empirical observations and historical examples, Chapter I illuminates the cases of those two major terrorist groups in Greece, their similarities and their differences on their way to their demise.

Chapter II presents the methods that the Greek political community chose in order to battle terrorism over the last 30 years to preserve law and order; terrorism cannot be dealt with through institutional means alone or solely by state mechanisms. To deal with terrorism effectively, citizens must accept and must develop a social conscience against terrorism that will set aside party expediencies. In the fight against terrorism, the political parties are obligated to cooperate in their efforts to triumph over terrorist groups and because in our time, democracy can be defended only through broad participation, by dialogue and consent, and by the determination of all social forces to defeat its enemies.<sup>2</sup> The major dilemma, in such situations, is how to protect democracy without losing or sacrificing basic social freedoms; freedoms that have been gained by citizens after many years of conflicts and protests against totalitarian and authoritarian regimes.

Consequently, Chapter II examines what anti-terrorism policies are feasible for a democratic state to follow. Furthermore, this chapter catalogues the steps that Greece took against the terrorist groups and discusses the legislative measures taken to eliminate these groups. Finally, this chapter explains the reasons these terrorist groups declined in 2002 after the Greek police failed to eradicate them for nearly 30 years.

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<sup>2</sup> Dora Bakoyiannis, "Terrorism in Greece," *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Spring 1995, pp. 17-28.

Chapter III analyzes the structure and the function of the intelligence services in Greece and role and the control that the intelligence community played during the democratization period just after the military dictatorship. The intelligence community played a crucial role, but of course, most important was their role in disrupting the emerging terrorist groups.

However, before addressing the major question of how the Greek democratic regime can control the intelligence services through a legal framework, understanding the historical origin of the Greek secret intelligence services is necessary. It is also essential to understand its mission in modern Greek democratic society, the phases of the intelligence process that these intelligence services have adopted to function more efficiently, the structure and formation of the National Intelligence Service, and finally, the legal framework under which the NIS functions.

Chapter IV examines the role of the intelligence and security services in Greece, not only the domestic but also the foreign services, which contributed tremendously to uprooting the terrorist groups. This chapter examines how control and oversight of the Greek services was achieved and what mechanisms the governments used for that purpose. This chapter also elucidates the reasons for intelligence in the modern society and how it aids society. This chapter also justifies the existence of those services in order to protect the countries from threats that could emerge anywhere today.

The conclusion, Chapter V, reexamines the importance of the intelligence services in the war against terrorism and evaluates the aforementioned concepts, which clarify the debate and make Greece's policy understandable. This chapter also examines any operations beyond their jurisdiction and legality that the intelligence services could have conducted against the will of a democratic society and how the Greeks avoided this after the collapse of the military dictatorship.



## II. TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS IN GREECE

### A. INTRODUCTION

Almost after three decades of unsuccessfully combating various leftist terrorist groups from 1975 until 2002, a failure due to the belief that these groups were not a direct threat to the democracy, Greek authorities made incredible progress toward the discovery of November 17, the primary leftist group. This breakthrough came on June 29<sup>th</sup> 2002, when a time bomb detonated in the hands of its handler in the port of Piraeus. Because the police gathered forensic evidence from this bomb attack, they eventually arrested the first member of November 17, over 27 years after its first attack on December 23, 1975, and the assassination of CIA Athens station chief, Richard Welch, outside his house in Athens.

This was the first time since 1996 that Greece's Prime Minister Costas Simitis, declared "we have begun to unfold the mystery of November 17,"<sup>3</sup> as the Greek law enforcement's authorities seemed to have a clear picture of the structure of November 17.

In mid-2003, the Greek government believes that the most important members of the organization have been arrested. Their trial began in Athens in March 2003. However, a series of problems has emerged. The members of the group repudiate the authority of the court to judge them, as they assume themselves to be political criminals, not terrorists, and their crimes to be political crimes.

The trial, its procedures, and the light that will be shed on the unanswered questions that have troubled Greece for so many years have interested the nation greatly since. November 17 was the last communist terrorist organization in Europe and since Greek authorities failed to arrest even one of its members after nearly 30 years of lawlessness, a myth took shape around that revolutionary organization.

Presently, the Greek authorities have started dislodge the other major terrorist group in Greece, the Revolutionary People's Struggle (ELA), and startling revelations

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<sup>3</sup> *Eleftherotypia* (Greek Newspaper), July 2, 2002 Issue.

have arisen about the connections between the two groups, about the way they function and their strategies, and eventually their connections with other terrorist organizations in Europe and elsewhere.

After the lethal attacks against the United States, on September 11, 2001, the arrest and collapse of a terrorist group has more importance. Obviously, in our era, the phenomenon of terrorism has become global, escaping the narrow limits of national interest. The connection and the cooperation of terrorist organizations globally must be examined carefully during investigations and during the attempts to eliminate them. The attacks of September 2001 against the United States revealed the broadness of such threats, and even *Le Monde*, the French newspaper, wrote the next day on its first page, “We are all Americans.”<sup>4</sup> The attacks were directed not only against the United States but also against all the open democratic and multicultural societies. As a result, democratic countries declared their support and solidarity to the Americans and their intention to bring the people who were responsible for the attacks before the law for the appropriate punishment.

An investigation is able to show that these terrorists groups, whether or not they are known to the public, share interrelations that make them more deadly, but more vulnerable to their final elimination by national governments and police and intelligence services.

Therefore, the origins of these terrorist organizations, their historical background, the socio-political environment, and ideology must be understood. These terrorist groups produced nothing apart from victims. No one suppressed them, and they did not seek to liberate anyone. These terrorists took advantage of the rights and freedoms of the democratic regime and tried to overthrow it violently.

Examining these issues will help other nations fight and eliminate terrorist organizations around the world. One must understand the issues that contribute to the emergence of such groups, if one hopes to eliminate them permanently. These terrorist

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<sup>4</sup> *Le Monde* (French Newspaper), September 12, 2001 Issue.

groups must understand that their tactics are strongly opposed by the civilized world and are regarded as moral and political crimes that will never be accepted or defended by the modern democratic societies.

## **B. DEFINITIONS OF TERROR AND TERRORISM**

Terror is a highly subjective experience and everyone has different limits and reasons for feeling frightened of certain experiences and images. One definition of terror is the unintended or derived by-product of other events that are beyond our power to predict or to control.<sup>5</sup>

According to Paul Wilkinson, a Professor at the University of St. Andrews and an expert in the study of terrorism since the early 1970s, terrorism is the systematic use of coercive intimidation, usually to achieve political ends, and it is used to create and to exploit a climate of fear among a wider target group than the immediate victims of the violence, and to publicize a cause, as well as to coerce a target to accept the terrorist's goals.<sup>6</sup> Terrorism concerns the use of murder and destruction and the threat of murder and destruction because one way for terrorists to achieve their demands is to terrorize all individuals and governments.

Even though there is no agreed upon detailed definition for terrorism, as to its character or type of operation, most experts agree that the element of fear is important to the determination of that phenomenon. Additional characteristics of the terrorist groups are ruthlessness, disregard for established humanitarian values, and a limitless quest for publicity through the mass media. The most common methods that are used by terrorists to achieve their goals are hijacking, hostage taking, bombings, assassinations and mass murders. However, terrorism is not only politically motivated. Common criminals might use terrorist attacks such as ransom or revenge, just to succeed in their vile goals.

Terrorism is usually divided into two basic types: factional terrorism, which assumes international goals, and national or politically motivated terrorism, which focuses on forcing changes solely in a particular state.<sup>7</sup> The distinction entails terrorist

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<sup>5</sup> Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism and the Liberal State*, Frank Cass Publishers, p. 51.

<sup>6</sup> Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism versus Democracy: The Liberal State Response*, Frank Cass Publishers, 2001, p. 12.

<sup>7</sup> Graham Evans and Jeffrey Newnham, *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations*, p. 531.

groups that are either internationally or nationally motivated.<sup>8</sup> Internal terrorism is restricted to national territory, and international terrorism is an attack beyond international borders, and even on a foreign target. Of course, in our modern world, terrorist attacks usually have international dimensions, and they are not confined to a single state or region. Law enforcement agencies have much more ability to control internal terrorists because they have the resources, authority and jurisdiction over their own nation.

Terrorism and its actions are not part of a philosophy or a political movement but are only a method of conflict and of war, which terrorists choose to achieve their goals. Also, cases exist in which terrorism has been used for liberal reasons, for example in Cyprus and Algeria against the colonial rule of the United Kingdom and France. Yet even in these cases, actions like killings and bombings were not morally justified, as the basic rights of innocent citizens were in danger. The paradox is that even with tremendously lethal attacks, the terrorists' goals have rarely been successful and terrorist attacks alone have not been able to overthrow democracies or even repressive regimes.

The popularity of terrorism among the nationalists, ideological, and religious extremists might simply be their desire to express their hatred and desire for revenge. Terrorists have a tactical edge because their methods are relatively cheap, easy to organize, and are not considered very risky.<sup>9</sup>

In general, terrorism as a method of warfare has the following salient characteristics:<sup>10</sup>

- There are no inherently concerns about the after effects of terrorist attacks,
- Terrorism is mainly arbitrary and unpredictable, in the minds of its victims and audience, and in its effects upon individuals and society,
- Terrorism implicitly denies the recognition of all rules, principles and international conventions of war,
- Terrorists' reject all moral constraints, which is reflected in the use of terrible and dreadful weapons,
- Terrorists justify politically motivated terrorism to seek revenge.

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<sup>8</sup> Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism versus Democracy: The Liberal State Response*, p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>10</sup> Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism and the Liberal State*, pp. 53-54.

Terrorists believe that they act according to a higher revolutionary morality that justifies all their actions, even actions that are essentially not much different from the actions of common criminals. They pay no attention to the generally accepted humanitarian principles and values and with much defiance and pride, they place themselves above and outside moral law. As concerns written law, they believe it to be a creation of the ruling class, an “international conspiracy” against their rights, their country, and their interests in general.

All the above characteristics of modern terrorists groups are applicable to the case of November 17, the revolutionary organization that embattled Greek society.

### **C. HISTORICAL, SOCIO-POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT**

Revolutionary behavior is a part of society and cannot be studied separately from its social, political and ideological environment. The terrorism by leftist groups in Greece was the result of a complicated series of political conditions and cultural influences. These conditions provided the foundations upon which terrorism was established in Greece during the 1970s.<sup>11</sup> Greek history during the last century and the geographic position of the country determined modern Greek political traditions.

Liberal, leftist traditions, and an idea of national legitimacy shaped a revolutionary ideology in which violent disagreement against political rules became the basic mental framework around which terrorist groups tried to establish a strategy that could have any possibility of success. The historical endurance and importance of these traditions influenced the way that November 17 selected its methods of resistance and justified the violence of the organization.

However, certain traumatic experiences in Greece’s political history were extremely different from any other country in Europe. More specifically, the Greek civil war from 1946 to 1949 was the culmination of a series of uneven struggles in Greek society between the left-wing guerrilla fighters and the right-wing government, as well as struggles that had begun in the mid-1920s between the political elite and the working

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<sup>11</sup> George Kassimeris, *Europe’s Last Red Terrorists: The Revolutionary Organization 17 November*, New York University Press, 2001, p. 8.

class.<sup>12</sup> In the end, the government prevailed and democracy survived, mainly by the 1947 intervention of the United States under the Truman doctrine in that conflict. Thus, Greece became the first battleground of the Cold War and the first victory against the Soviet Union and its allies.

An anti-communism campaign and a state of political repression prevailed in the country and the civil war schism expanded to the population. This division became the main element of political life in Greece for the next thirty years. The police and the secret services enforced discrimination against the communists or the citizens who supported communism, in the civil service, the army, the police, and the universities. Political and economic exclusion were widespread in society. A large police bureaucracy kept files on Greek citizens and the population was divided in two categories: “ethnikofrones” and “non-ethnikofrones,” meaning nationally minded citizens and leftists.<sup>13</sup> That situation continued until the summer of 1974, the moment the dictatorship collapsed and Greece transitioned to democracy after seven years of military junta.

A previous attempt to transform the nation begun during the early 1960s, with the victory of the liberal Center Union party in the 1963 election and had violently ended with the 1967 Colonels’ coup, which imposed a military regime for seven years. This period dramatically impacted political life in Greece and national political values and attitudes. At that time, the fundamental institutional pillars of the Greek political system, such as the throne, the army and the parliament, were terrified of the changes in the Greek society and to changes to the political democratization of the country. As a result, the army, which had a dominant role in society, decided to act and to try to determine the developments.

Therefore, the coup of 1967 was in one sense, a desperate attempt by the army to protect its position and supremacy. The military abandoned their post-civil war role in Greece as simple arbitrators of internal conflicts of the ruling classes and acquired a

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<sup>12</sup> John O. Iatrides, *Greece at the Crossroads: The Civil War and its Legacy*, Pennsylvania University Press, 1995, p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> Minas Samatas, *Greek McCarthyism: A Comparative Assessment of Greek Post-Civil War Repressive Anticommunism and the US Truman-McCarthy Era*, in *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora*, Vol. 13, Fall-Winter 1986, p. 35.

prevailing role and position in the power structure in order to reorganize the country's political life by extinguishing the conditions of anarchy and chaos that were omnipresent in Greek politics.<sup>14</sup>

However, eventually and fortunately for Greece, the military dictatorship collapsed in the summer of 1974. This collapse of the military junta came as a cumulative result of the economic crisis from 1972 to 1973, the student uprising of November 1973 in the Athens Polytechnic, and the Turkish military invasion in Cyprus in the summer of 1974. The outcome of this invasion was losing the northern part of the Cyprus Island and the perpetuation of that tense situation until today, even though the United Nations' Security Council has condemned the possession of that region by Turkey, with many resolutions.

At a deeper level, the military junta in Greece collapsed because it failed (like most authoritarian models of government) to establish an apolitical system with the appearance of legitimacy that could follow the military regime.<sup>15</sup>

A mixture of continuity and change marked the 1974 transition (metapolitefsi), from an authoritarian rule to a democratic constitutional order. The Greek conservative party (New Democracy) came into power for two consequent periods until 1981, when the socialist party (PASOK-Pan Hellenic Socialist Movement) won the national elections.

During the years of conservative governance, a new constitution was implemented, the communist party was legalized, junta sympathizers were expelled from the armed forces and the junta's leaders were prosecuted for their crimes. However, there were no systematic purges of the civil-military bureaucracy, the police apparatus and key sectors of the state. Also, in 1980, Greece became a full member of the European Economic Community (EEC). This gave a new potential to the Greek economy and policy because Greece gained power in the international arena through its participation in the EEC.

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<sup>14</sup> George Kassimeris, *Europe's Last Red Terrorists: the Revolutionary Organization 17 November*, p. 21.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

The political and economic elements, however, remained in the hands of the old order. The main reason for this was the need for political stability, economic growth, and defenses against Turkey, which had once again become a crucial factor in Greek foreign affairs, as Turkey was regarded as a permanent threat.

PASOK's victory in the 1981 election ended almost half a century of right-wing political monopoly, and it was the first socialist government that Greece had ever had.<sup>16</sup> The promised change in political life (Allaghi) that PASOK promised Greek society was not delivered. Many indications of compromise between the rhetoric and the reality of the societal problems became clear.

Symptoms of arrogance became clear, symptoms like corruption and bribery and from 1990 onwards, the use of scandals and ethical accusations became an accepted feature of Greek political life. Accusations of political abuse, corruption and economic waste had a tremendously negative impact on the public spirit.<sup>17</sup>

The events that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union and other regimes in Eastern Europe, the Yugoslav crisis, and the emergence of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), a country considered by the Greeks to be a serious threat to Greece itself, complicated the political and international environment. The outcome of these problems was a general crisis and discontent of the Greek citizens about the political process and a loss of faith in the political parties that left their corrupt signs on society.

#### **D. NATURE AND GOALS OF THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS**

Almost 95 identified left-wing terrorist groups appeared in Greece after the collapse of the dictatorship and the transition to democracy, but only two, 17 N and ELA, were important and their actions had severe implications on the entire society.

The Revolutionary Organization November 17 (17 N) and the Revolutionary People's Struggle (Epanastatikos Laikos Agonas-ELA), the two most significant revolutionary organizations in post-dictatorial Greece, used direct violence to force

<sup>16</sup> George Th. Mavrogordatos, *The Rise of the Green Sun: The Greek Election of 1981*, Centre of Contemporary Greek Studies, King's College, Occasional Paper No. 1, 1983.

<sup>17</sup> George Kassimeris, *Europe's Last Red Terrorists: the Revolutionary Organization 17 November*, p. 37. Scandals like Koskotas' affair, illegal wiretapping, sale of the cement company AGET-Heracles to the Italian firm Calcesruzzi.



political change. These two extreme-leftist terrorist groups emerged in the mid-1970s, in a political system that “not only provided fewer civil and political rights to its citizens but also was unable to focus attention on, identify, and locate the real obstacles to effective political and social reform.”<sup>18</sup>

The November 17 was heavily influenced by the events of the civil war, the right wing repressive state that prevailed in Greece for about half a century, and the military dictatorship, and it engaged in violence because it viewed itself as the vanguard of the working class, the last defender of Greek national independence.<sup>19</sup>

The November 17 was a radical, leftist terrorist group with few members, as has been proved after the arrests of its members who loathed and hated the United States and the West because they were capitalistic and imperialistic systems. Most experts believe that November 17 had fewer than 25 members. The November 17, adopting the communist ideology, continued its anti-Western stance even after the Cold War. It was fundamentally opposed to Greek participation in NATO, to the European Union, to the US military bases remaining in Greece and to the Turkish military occupation of Cyprus. Ideologically, the group considered itself the judge, jury and executioner of those whom it classified as enemies of the Greek populace.<sup>20</sup>

The organization took its name from November 17, 1973; the date of the student uprising against the military junta at the Athens Polytechnic University, where more than 20 students lost their lives as Greek Army tanks suppressed the protest.<sup>21</sup>

The November 17's initial attacks were directed at senior U.S. officials and Greek public figures, but during the 1980s, the group expanded its operations to include the bombings of ordinary citizens and property. Since 1990, its targets have also included foreign business and European Union facilities. The organization's first known attack

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<sup>18</sup> Nikos Mouzelis, *Greece Prepares for Twenty-First Century*, John Hopkins University Press, 1995, p. 24.

<sup>19</sup> Andrew Corsun, “Group Profile: The Revolutionary Organization 17 November in Greece,” *Terrorism*, Vol. 14, April-June 1991, pp. 77-104.

<sup>20</sup> *Jane's Intelligence Review*, George Kassimeris, “Two Decades of Terrorism in Greece,” March 1996, pp. 117-119.

<sup>21</sup> George Kassimeris, *Europe's Last Red Terrorists: the Revolutionary Organization 17 November*, p. 43.

came in December 1975 when the CIA's Athens station chief was shot with a .45-caliber pistol, the group's weapon of choice. Since that time, the group claimed responsibility for 22 more assassinations and conducted over 100 attacks against carefully selected and mostly heavily protected targets. Clearly, the collapse of the Soviet Union and communism had no deterring effect on the group's motivations and actions because they did not consider the collapse of the Soviet Union as a collapse of their Marxist ideology.

ELA was the other major radical leftist group, strongly anti-capitalistic and opposed to imperialist domination, exploitation and oppression. Its ideology was mainly anti-American and its intentions were to force the U.S. military forces to leave Greece. According to its manifesto, "the conflagration that will eventually lead to the overthrow of the capitalist regime will be a long, hard and violent armed struggle."<sup>22</sup> The group's primary goal was to establish a specific strategy of attack and a political line, which would have the ability to make it easier to unite all the groups that were against the capitalist system.

The group viewed itself as a part of the international movement that regarded concepts and regimes, such as imperialism, capitalism and fascism, as the same enemy with various faces. ELA carried out hundreds of non-lethal bombings at symbolic material targets and tried to present its violence as a way to respond to material constraints, while it simultaneously rejected the possibility of building socialism and communism from the existing political system.<sup>23</sup> ELA believed that the countries of Western Europe were the crucial battlefield in the conflict between the international proletariat and the imperialist bourgeoisie and also regarded the events of November 1973 in the Athens Polytechnic as incompleting. Its view was that an armed struggle was necessary to complete the revolution.

Certainly, their campaigns, tactics, strategies and targets varied greatly, but one major difference existed between the 17 N and ELA: the latter was considered one terrorist group that was capable of being infiltrated. Unlike 17 N, which issued only

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<sup>22</sup> ELA Manifesto: *Yia tin anaptyxi tou Ellinikou Laikou kai Epanastatiku Kinimatos* (For the Development of the Greek Popular and Revolutionary Movement), June/July 1978, p. 12.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

communiqués, ELA, used an underground publication, a magazine called Counter-Information (Antipliroforissi), to outline its politico-military strategy and to educate its sympathizers.<sup>24</sup>

In the late 1970s, the Greek populace had no desire to support a revolution. On the contrary, after seven years of dictatorship, the people and the country deeply desired political and social stability, a stability that could lead the country to a better future as well as prosperity on a level equal to Western Europe.

The actual political environment in Greece was much different from the environment that existed in the minds of the terrorists. Their aim was to overthrow the democracy by violence, and they attempted to blackmail society and its institutions with fear and terror in the hope that they could lead the nation toward totalitarianism.<sup>25</sup>

The two major terrorist organizations, 17 N and ELA, misinterpreting the desires of the entire population and the political situation, decided that the time was ripe to continue to spread the “revolution,” which had begun in November 1973. Their final goal was establishing a purely socialist society whose success would only occur by an armed struggle.

## **E. DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATIONAL PHASES OF THE GROUPS**

The groups, (mainly November 17), responded to national and international challenges, in three phases: 1975 to 1980, 1980 to 1990, and 1990 to 2002.

### **1. Phase One: 1975 to 1980**

The November 17's terrorist activities started differently from the other European ultra-left terrorist groups. They operated in Athens solely and almost never attempted to expand their sphere of influence on a national level. Even more, relying on assassinations was not a gradual decision. Instead, they started their campaign abruptly by murdering their targets. Contrarily, the Red Brigades in Italy persisted for seven years and two operational phases before they began killing their victims.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Jane's Intelligence Review*, George Kassimeris, “Two Decades of Terrorism in Greece,” March 1996, pp. 117-119.

<sup>25</sup> *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Dora Bakoyiannis, “Terrorism in Greece,” Spring 1995, pp. 17-28.

<sup>26</sup> *Liberation* (French Newspaper), 24 December 1979.

The November 17 appeared for the first time on December 23, 1975, when they stalked and assassinated Richard Welch, the CIA's station chief in Athens. Twelve months after the attack on Welch, they murdered a former police captain during the Colonel's junta. Ten days after that last murder, the French newspaper, *Liberation*, published the group's communiqué in which the terrorists claimed credit for the attacks and explained the operation in detail.<sup>27</sup> During this first phase, the terrorist attacks were deliberately designed to link the group with the concerns of the Greek masses and to capitalize on the public perceptions of the United States' complicity in establishing the Greek military dictatorship and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. Hence, November 17 targeted symbolic enemies of the Greek populace, such as members of the U.S. intelligence community and members of the junta's police and military apparatus.

Likewise, in April 1977, they released their 28-page manifesto, titled "A Response to Political Parties and Organizations." In that, they perceived all mainstream political parties as being either myopic or repressive, accused the Greek state of being an American vassal, and presented their belief that Greece needed violence in order to change. At the same time, the group denounced finance capital, a consumer society and parliamentary democracy. According to them, no peaceful transition to socialism could occur. Revolutionary violence had to ensue as a response to right-wing pressure and declining working class radicalism.

All the victims of this period were shot with the same .45-calibre weapon, which became the group's signature weapon. By using this weapon, the group ensured that no other terrorist group could take credit for its actions.<sup>28</sup>

## **2. Phase Two: 1983 to 1990**

PASOK's election victory in 1981, which was repeated in the 1986 election, ended almost 50 years of right-wing political monopoly and brought the socialists into power with promises of a dramatic break from the recent past. The socialists launched a number of positive and long overdue social and legal reforms, namely, the recognition of

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<sup>27</sup> George Kassimeris, *Europe's Last Red Terrorists: the Revolutionary Organization 17 November*, p. 74.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

national resistance, the abolition of the remaining civil-war legislation, the establishment of the National Health System, the creation of equality between men and women, and the institution of civil marriages.

Furthermore, the socialists amended the constitution and adopted a foreign policy that was not pro-United States, evoking emotions of national pride on the left. However, during those years, the state's economic performance was poor. The insistence on maintaining generous wage and welfare payments at a time of stagnant growth drove public-sector borrowing to record levels, enlarged the already bloated public-sector, and created higher public deficits and double-digit inflation. At the same time, persistent public protests against PASOK's confused foreign policy, specifically over the renewal of the agreement for U.S. bases, created problems for the government.<sup>29</sup>

From October 1981 to November 1983, November 17 did not perpetrate any terrorist activities or release any documents, leading the intelligence services, the police, and the mass media to presume that the organization had dissolved. Assassinating the head of the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group in Greece (JUSMAGG), Captain George Tsantes, USN, along with his driver on November 15, 1983, proved the exact opposite.

In a seven page communiqué, the group explained its three years of silence and its belief that PASOK has abandoned socialism and betrayed the people's trust. U.S. bases were still on Greek soil, and Greece had not exited NATO and EEC contrary to the socialists' promises prior to their election in 1981.

The November 17 used that assassination as an occasion to declare war against the Americans, and the perceived servants of the ruling bourgeoisie class and imperialism,<sup>30</sup> inaugurating a campaign of violence to remove them from Greece. Their targets now also became the political establishment, mainly the New Democracy party and PASOK, and the mass media. In February 1985, the first victims were Nikos Momferatos, the publisher of the country's largest-selling conservative newspaper and his driver-bodyguard.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>30</sup> 7 November Communiqué, *Eleftherotypia* (Greek Newspaper), October 1983.

Meanwhile, by the end of 1986, the rapidly worsening economic situation brought strong pressure from the EEC for reforms, which led to a stringent economic stabilization program with a freeze on wages as its dominant characteristic. The bad economic situation became even worse with the continuous strikes and protests against these austerity measures. PASOK explained its modified economic policy as an attempt to save the country from bankruptcy.<sup>31</sup>

The terrorist response was almost immediate. After the killing of a 15-year old demonstrator by a stray police bullet, November 17 detonated a remote controlled car bomb aimed at a police bus. This was the first time that the group used car bombings. Fifteen of the 22 policemen inside the car were injured, one of them fatally. That attack against the police force was the bloodiest and shocked the authorities and the public, showing that November 17 was determined to raise the level of violence to induce mass casualties.<sup>32</sup>

The years that followed were full of incidents that gave November 17 an excuse for the terrorists to kill again. The 1987 crisis in the Aegean Sea between Greece and Turkey, the War in the Gulf, and the Bank of Crete scandal became the focus of Greek social and political attention. Regarding the bank scandal, members of the cabinet and the Prime Minister himself were indicted for bribery and embezzlement. Ten months of ethical accusations and special court hearings polarized the Greek society, weakened the economy, and brought the New Democracy party into power again from 1990 to 1993.

This time the terrorist's targets were even higher profile. Along with the destruction of property and the "usual" U.S. and Greek police and military targets, leading Greek industrialists, Turkish diplomats, well-known Greek scientists, members of the judiciary, members of the cabinet and the parliament were either injured or assassinated. In September 1989, November 17 shot and fatally wounded Pavlos Bakoyiannis who became the first active politician to be targeted, and the entire political establishment of the country was horrified by this act.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> George Kassimeris, *Europe's Last Red Terrorists: the Revolutionary Organization 17 November*, p. 78.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>33</sup> Andrew Corsun, pp. 77-104.

In addition, the nation was horrified at the assassination of Pavlos Bakoyiannis, the chief parliamentary spokesman of the conservative New Democracy party and son-in-law of its leader who became the Greek Prime Minister one year after the murder. The group used that murder, in particular, to send a clear warning against “the corrupt and rotten establishment,” and to further destabilize the state and dictate the course of events. Also, in order to divide public opinion further, due to the political instability that occurred in Greece at that time, the group declared in a statement “the worsening parliamentary instability crystallized the political and social ills of the last two decades in the country.”<sup>34</sup>

### **3. Phase Three: 1990 to 2002**

In April 1990, after three elections in ten months, the New Democracy party managed to form a government with a parliamentary majority of one. The November 17 ideological antipathy toward the new government was fortified by the state’s dogmatic free market approach that followed. The new government proceeded with the privatization of a large part of the public sector and the closing of the heavily indebted industries under state control. This policy was to be followed by the socialists when they again came into power three years later. The programs adopted by the Greek governments in the 1990s allowed Greece to become the 12<sup>th</sup> member of the European Monetary Union in 2000 and to become the 26<sup>th</sup> richest country in the world by the end of 2001.

The terrorists responded to both conservative and socialist government’s programs, “the policy of selling out Greece” in their words, by striking the offices of multinational companies, British and American banks and businessmen, the Finance Minister and his main advisor in 1992, Turkish diplomats, and ship owners.

Simultaneously, the major international issues, such as the Gulf War, the crisis in the former Yugoslavia and the abduction of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) leader, Abdullah Ocalan, created a new situation for the terrorists. These terrorists felt that it was their obligation to respond in their own way to these situations, to these imperialistic actions of the West, and to the betrayal of the Greek socialist government. Consequently,

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<sup>34</sup> 17 November Communiqué, *Eleftherotypia* (Greek Newspaper), September 1989.

they conducted several attacks against Western targets involved in the war against Iraq. From 1994 to 2000, only two executions occurred. The rest of the attacks were low-level bombings and rocket attacks. Many of them failed due to obsolete ordnance.

The last terrorist victim was the British military attaché in Athens Brigadier Stephen Saunders, and for many people it was a crucial mistake of the organization. This occurred on June 8, 2000. That murder was the group's response to NATO's campaign in the former Yugoslavia. By attacking Saunders, November 17 considered that it attacked the inherent arrogance of the Anglo-Saxon political and military establishment and its "deeply-rooted belief that they are superior people and are therefore legalized to annihilate pariah nations through sanctions and bombardment, bringing misery, disease and death upon innocent people."<sup>35</sup>

Eventually, an incredible breakthrough occurred on June 29<sup>th</sup> 2002, when a time bomb detonated in the hands of handler in the port of Piraeus. Though this mail handler was injured, the bomb failed to reach its destination and this attack eventually led Greek police to the arrest of the first member of November 17, nearly 27 years since their first assassination of CIA Athens station chief, Richard Welch, outside his house in Athens on December 23, 1975.

These arrests were for many people the joyful end of that terrorist organization, rightfully labeled a "phantom organization."<sup>36</sup> Yet many people had also believed that bringing November 17 to justice would never be possible.

A similar ending befell the other major terrorist group, ELA. Many arrests took place during 2002 in Greece, and the authorities believed that the official end of that group was also only a matter of time.

The methods these terrorist groups selected to induce a revolution did nothing to further their cause. As a result, their mission was doomed to failure. As Alberto Franceschini, one of the historic founders and leaders of the Italian Red Brigades,

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<sup>35</sup> *Terrorism and Political Violence*, George Kassimeris, "Europe's Last Red Terrorists: The Revolutionary Organization 17 November 1975-2000," Vol. 13, No. 2, Summer 2001, pp. 67-84.

<sup>36</sup> Andrew Corsun, pp. 77-104.



declared on Greek television in 1992, “with violence you will achieve exactly the opposite of what you aim for,”<sup>37</sup> accepting the reality that armed struggle is futile, November 17 had to cease fire and stop the senseless killings.

A widespread belief is that eradicating these terrorist groups came slowly because the Greek authorities were not imminent, direct and forceful. This hesitancy facilitated the terrorists, giving them the necessary time and place to further their cause and conduct their violence.

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<sup>37</sup> *Terrorism and Political Violence*, George Kassimeris, Greece: “Twenty Years of Political Terrorism,” Vol. 7, No. 2, Summer 1995, pp. 74-92.

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### III. RESPONSE OF GREEK STATE TO TERRORISM

#### A. INTRODUCTION

Terrorism cannot be dealt with through institutional means alone, or solely by state mechanisms that hope to preserve law and order. To deal with terrorism effectively, everyone must accept and develop a social conscience against terrorism that will set aside party expediencies and self interest.<sup>38</sup>

Greece is an especially interesting case study for terrorism as well as for anti-terrorism policies owing to all the events that have occurred in Greece since 1975. Of course, after many years dealing with terrorism, after many bombings, assassinations and shootings, everyone might believe that the Greek authorities could find a perfect solution to the terrorist problem, and that they would be experts in terms of fighting against terrorism.

Unfortunately, that was not the case. Despite almost three decades of terrorist attacks, Greek authorities were unable to arrest even a single terrorist. Furthermore, they were unable to obtain confirmed fingerprints of members of either group or to attain blood samples, strands of hair, or scraps of clothing. Not a single item of forensic evidence existed that could bring the terrorists closer to being arrested.<sup>39</sup> This shameful record affects everyone involved in the anti-terrorism campaign in Greece. Only during the last few years have Greek authorities come to understand this complex situation. Today, methodical policies and strategies have appeared with the ultimate purpose of eliminating terrorism in Greece.

In the fight against terrorism, all political parties are obliged to cooperate in their efforts to triumph against terrorist groups. Democracy can be defended only through broad participation, by dialogue and consent, and by the determination of all social forces to uncover its enemies.<sup>40</sup> The major dilemma, in such situations, is how to protect

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<sup>38</sup> *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Dora Bakoyiannis, "Terrorism in Greece," Spring 1995, pp. 17-28.

<sup>39</sup> *Jane's Intelligence Review*, George Kassimeris, "Two Decades of Terrorism in Greece," March 1996, pp. 117-119.

<sup>40</sup> *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Dora Bakoyiannis, "Terrorism in Greece," Spring 1995, pp. 17-28.

democracy without losing or sacrificing basic social freedoms; freedoms that have been gained by citizens after decades of conflicts and protests against totalitarian and authoritarian regimes.

The political parties are responsible for reaching a consensus about the decisions and actions that they must take in order to fight terrorism. Naturally, the usefulness of politicians is measured by the effectiveness of their deeds, not by their good intentions.

Moreover, a successful anti-terrorist policy is one that reduces the amount of terrorist violence.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, if the level of terrorist activity is decreased or not, over time, under a specific policy, one should be able to determine whether that policy is, or is not, effective. Every policy is likely to have different impacts, different techniques and different outcomes in the war against terrorism.

Consequently, this chapter will attempt to elucidate what kinds of anti-terrorism policies are feasible for a democratic state to follow. These policies will be used to reduce terrorism and to measure their effectiveness. Furthermore, this chapter lists the steps that Greece followed against the terrorist groups that emerged after the collapse of the dictatorship in 1974. This chapter also reviews the legislative measures taken to eliminate the terrorist groups. Finally, this chapter examines the reasons these terrorist groups declined during 2002 after almost three decades of unsuccessful attempts by the Greek police to eradicate them.

## **B. POLICIES AGAINST TERRORISM**

The most usual and successful policies that are applied to the war against terrorist groups could be included in the following six categories:<sup>42</sup>

- Ceasefires and negotiations with the terrorists
- Improving economic conditions
- Making reforms
- Collective punishments
- Emergency powers and other anti-terrorist legislation
- Use of security forces

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<sup>41</sup> Christopher Hewitt, *The Effectiveness of Anti-Terrorist Policies*, University Press of America, 1984, p. xii.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

These policies can be divided into two types: those whose main aims are against the terrorists themselves, and those whose main goals are against the supporters of terrorists among the entire population. From the above policies, the aim of the first is to curtail the violence of the terrorists. The next three focuses on those who support the terrorists. The last two policies impact the terrorists but they also directly impact the general population.

### **1. Ceasefires and Negotiations with the Terrorists**

The politicians in democracies have many reasons to prefer such a policy against any terrorist group. The first reason is that the ethics of a democratic society prefer to resolve conflicts through negotiations rather than by using force. The second is that the leaders of a terrorist group are the only people who can stop the terrorist activities with only a simple command. The last reason is that the results of negotiations are a ceasefire and a truce, and these facts are also desirable by the society.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, the result of a ceasefire is usually a decline in the level of violence, but unfortunately, the negotiations between governments and terrorists very rarely lead to conflict resolution because the demands of the terrorists are extremely radical, with no margin for compromises and eventually, the discussions end in failure and the truce ceases to exist.

Therefore, the truth is that negotiations with terrorists are a short-term policy with few aspirations for permanent future resolution. Moreover, the terrorists stand to gain far more than the governments.

### **2. Improving Economic Conditions**

There is a widespread impression that economic conditions are one extremely important factor that determines the size and amount of social conflict, and that the conflict is more possible and more serious in poorer regions than in richer areas. However, contrary to that perception, the reality is quite the opposite.<sup>44</sup> Depressive economic conditions are seldom connected with terrorism, and inexplicably, the opposite more readily happens. Research and statistics reveal that greater terrorist activities have occurred during good economic conditions.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

### **3. Making Reforms**

Another very popular point of view, in terms of terrorist activities, is that violence is a result of popular grievances and the removal of these grievances through reforms decreases violence.<sup>45</sup> It is true that reforms have the ability to change the situation, but reformation is a procedure requiring time. Thus, it is a long-term solution. Besides, politicians must bear in mind that concessions made from a position of weakness can increase terrorist violence.

### **4. Collective Punishments**

This method has been used many times throughout history and the indications are that it might reduce the level of violence for only that specific region, and only the first time that such a policy is applied. Another characteristic of this policy is that eventually the violence moves from one area to another. Therefore, the amount of violence does not decrease.

### **5. Emergency Powers and Other Anti-Terrorist Legislation**

Quite interesting is the fact that the emergence of terrorism is more possible in democratic states than in totalitarian or authoritarian regimes.<sup>46</sup> The democratic states face the dilemma that the powers, which have the ability to defeat terrorism, are almost the same that are central to the existence of the non-democratic regimes.

The most typical measures that a democratic society takes in an emergency situation are:<sup>47</sup>

- control the possession of firearms,
- require that civilians carry their identification cards,
- strengthen security forces to arrest and to search without pressing charges,
- impose curfews,
- establish special courts and procedures to try those who are accused of terrorist offences.

Such anti-terrorist laws often impose draconian penalties upon those who are convicted of terrorist offences to deter and to curtail basic political rights, such as free speech and the right of assembly.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

Imposing emergency powers at least, demonstrates that the state has recognized the severity of the situation and is determined to do something about it. In the same sense, terminating these measures indicates that the state is finally in control of the situation and no further state of emergency is necessary. The most important question about a state of emergency may not be whether or not it is necessary, but rather concerns the use of these powers and their impact on the democracy when the emergency ends.

#### **6. Use of Security Forces**

The important role played by security forces is indicated by the attempts made to increase their capabilities, to increase their numbers, to improve their special training and their special equipment, and to reorganize their structures. However, the two most usual tactics of security forces, patrolling and indiscriminate mass searches, produce poor results, and the increased military activities do not demonstrate any decrease in terrorist activities, as military activities and terrorist violence are significantly and strongly associated.

#### **C. THE REASONS FOR THE DECLINE OF TERRORISM**

Even with the existence of such a large number of policies against terrorism, the reason for the decline in terrorism is still rather unclear. The decline in terrorism and the end of terrorism mainly concerns public opinion. Many reasons abound as to what eliminates a terrorist group, and the interpretations are often quite different.

For many people and experts on terrorism issues, the growth of terrorism is directly linked to the development of modern mass media communication.<sup>48</sup> The relationship between terrorists and the media provides benefits to both. Terrorists want publicity and want to communicate a message. The mass media desire more readers and viewers. Therefore, by decreasing the terrorists' access to the mass media, the terrorists will lose part of their power.

Another popular perception regarding the decline of terrorism assumes that terrorism would end if governments consistently adopted hard-line policies and coordinated their international implementation.<sup>49</sup> However, experts believe that terrorism

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<sup>48</sup> Martha Crenshaw, "How Terrorism Declines," *Terrorism Research and Public Policy*, pp. 69-87.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., pp. 69-87.

would cease to exist by changing the terrorists' perceptions of its legitimacy<sup>50</sup> because terrorism can end when the means no longer justify the ends desired. Other authors assume that terrorism would end if the social and economic conditions that actually created it could be improved, or the conditions and structural conditions of the Western societies, which actually permit it, could change. This view supposes that terrorism is a remnant of feudalism<sup>51</sup> with its origins rooted in history. Thus, terrorism is also a product of these roots, and as such, is an inevitable part of our society.

Unfortunately, all these theories do not explain the reasons terrorism decreases. Many flaws and omissions in these theories are apparent when this issue is thoroughly examined in great detail. What seems more obvious and plausible is the fact that the decline of terrorism appears to be related to the interplay of three factors: the government's response to terrorism, which is not restricted to preemption or deterrence; the strategic choices of the terrorist organization, and its organizational dynamics.<sup>52</sup>

By "the government's response" to terrorism, we mean the physical defeat of terrorists such as destroying its structure, removing its leaders, or blocking the recruitment of new members with policies and reforms that deprive terrorists of these advantages. By "the strategic choices of the terrorist organization," we mean the group's decision to abandon a terrorist strategy and to follow other milder policies, with no assassinations, kidnappings and bombings with the appearance of more suitable or justifiable tactics. Finally, by "organizational dynamics," we mean the group's organizational disintegration, the disagreements over common strategy, the struggle for power among the many leaders, the divisions among the group and defections to other rival groups, or the establishment of a new, more extreme organization.

Analyzing the perceptions of terrorists, regarding government policies and popular attitudes is essential to understanding the miscalculations that discredit terrorism before its supporters, provoke internal dissension, and justify government repression.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., pp. 69-87.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., pp. 69-87.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., pp. 69-87.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., pp. 69-87.



Terrorist groups, many times, do not have the ability and clear thinking to understand and to recognize their approaching failure, but when their actions lose any justification whatsoever in the eyes of the public, their strategy has certainly outlived its usefulness.

In the case of Greece, two of the above factors played significant roles in the demise of the two major leftist terrorist organizations: their physical defeat by the government and their organizational disintegration.

#### **D. GREEK RESPONSE TO TERRORISM**

Greece never used all the existing policies and techniques in their war against terrorists, as the Greek state never considered these groups as an imminent threat to the democratic regime and to the society at large. The most important instruments available to Greek authorities were the anti-terrorist laws that the state passed over the years.

The most possible explanation for such a policy, even though the number of terrorist attacks and assassinations increased is the fact that 17 N never enjoyed public support. They were always considered even in the communist party, an ultra-left terrorist anachronism, an extremely radical, old-fashioned group. Until the mid-1980s, domestic incidents of terrorism were regarded as casual events perpetuated by isolated anarchic agitators rather than a sustained campaign of violence directed at the Greek government and its allies. Greece was never considered to be in an emergency status that would require activating the emergency powers provision of its constitution, and the armed forces were never used in counter-terrorist operations, even though very important anti-terrorist legislation was passed.

An obvious problem in the Greek political system was the lack of a consensus on different point of views from the two major political parties, PASOK and the New Democracy, the ruling powers during the last years. The New Democracy party in 1978 and 1990 passed anti-terrorist laws, with the desire to confront and to eliminate terrorism; anti-terrorist laws, which were abolished by the PASOK governments as soon as they gained power in 1981 and 1993.

More specifically, the first attempt to deal with the problem came in 1978 when the New Democracy government introduced special anti-terrorist legislation called the “Bill to Combat Terrorism and Protect Democratic Polity” (Law 774/1978).<sup>54</sup>

However, this bill was passed not only because of the perceived threat of 17 N after the assassination of the CIA controller in Athens and the bomb attacks by ELA, but more as a response to the kidnapping of Aldo Moro and the rising number of terrorist episodes in neighboring Italy. Likewise, the bill was mainly based on the Italian and German anti-terrorism bills, with one difference. It did not increase police powers in the areas of search and seizures, opening mail, examining bank records or detaining individuals without specific charges.

Throughout the parliamentary debate, defining what precisely constitutes terrorism and terrorist groups polarized the discussion. The fear was that a lack of a strict definition of terrorism made the legislation dangerous, and it was characterized as the first step toward a tyrannical rule since the *modus operandi* of the state had not changed. Much selective right-wing ideological bias still remained in the state’s apparatus. PASOK especially, characterized the bill as the first step toward a despotic, undemocratic and tyrannical rule of law.<sup>55</sup> The party concluded that Law 774/1978 was “clearly not about terrorists but aimed instead at putting in place the ideological and political conditions to terrorize the Greek populace.”<sup>56</sup>

Furthermore, the public did not receive the anti-terrorist legislation positively. It legitimized the “stool pigeon” practice, a nightmare for the left since the civil war era, and created a lot of concern over potential civil liberties infringements and restrictions. The Greek state, and mainly society, was still recovering from the military dictatorship.

Hence, in 1983, nineteen months after the socialists came to power, they abolished this legislation, considering it dangerous and unnecessary and did not replace it with other legislation. As the Minister of Justice, Georgios-Alexandros Mangakis, declared “what we have in this country is not terrorism but isolated episodes of terrorism

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<sup>54</sup> *Terrorism and Political Violence*, George Kassimeris, “Greece: Twenty Years of Political Terrorism,” Vol. 7, No. 2, Summer 1995, pp. 74-92.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 74-92.

<sup>56</sup> Parliamentary Discussion Papers-Greek Parliament, 13 April 1978.

like the ones experienced by nearly all nations, even the most peaceful as Austria and Switzerland. For it is nowadays no longer for a country not to have endured some form of political violence.”<sup>57</sup> Interestingly, the bill did not have any deterrent effect since there were 222 subsequent incidents of terrorism.

When the socialists came to power, they tried to modernize the intelligence and security forces with the help of British experts who arrived in Athens in 1985 and trained their Greek counterparts for more than six months. However, although the Greek intelligence services seemed to be impenetrable from Soviet spies and neutralized the other major Greek terrorist group, ELA, their efforts did not lead to the arrest of any 17 N members.

The Greek Parliament passed a tough and controversial anti-terrorism law in 1990, Law 1916/1990, under the conservative majority, after the murder of Pavlos Bakoyiannis, the chief parliamentary spokesman of the New Democracy party. It was the first time that a member of parliament had become a target of a terrorist group. The new draconian bill 1916/1990 or “Bill for the Protection of the Society against Organized Crime,” embodied all the provisions of the previous Law 774/1978, with the exception of the death penalty. Moreover, it increased police powers in the areas of intelligence gathering, gave the right to the police to detain individuals for fifteen days without specific charges and evidence if disclosures might harm the investigation, protected the judges and their families, increased the reward offered for police informers, and forbade the press from publishing declarations from the terrorist groups. “The media are the terrorists’ best friend,”<sup>58</sup> Walter Laqueur once said and in Greece, many believed that there was a special relationship between the terrorists and the media.

Alexandros Katsandonis, formerly a Professor of Penal Law and one of the country’s most eminent legal experts, stated:<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 18 May 1983.

<sup>58</sup> *Terrorism and Political Violence*, George Kassimeris, “Greece: Twenty Years of Political Terrorism,” Vol. 7, No. 2, Summer 1995, pp. 74-92.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., pp. 74-92.

17 November, ELA and ...similar terrorist groups enjoy the easiest means of communication with the Greek people. They quite comfortably draft their proclamation or their declaration concerning their ideas or their positions regarding the crimes they have committed, they place the text in the wastebasket of ...some public urinal, and reveal by telephone to this or that newspaper the location of the valuable text. And the next day the positions of the ELA or of November 17 are circulated in eight columns on the first page, to be known to the further corner of the nation.

Therefore, the new anti-terrorist law turned the media community against the government because until 1990, it had enjoyed an absolute degree of freedom and had so far presented terrorism irresponsibly and sophistically by advertising the exclusivity of communiqués and conveying the terrorist propaganda. In Greece, events proved that political parties, the media, journalists, and other social institutions could not come to an agreement on the role of the mass media in coping with that extreme danger to society.

The PASOK and the Greek communist parties saw the bill as another attempt to degenerate the country's democratic institutions and as a threat to civil liberties. For the socialists, the parallels that the right-wing government tried to impose with other European states, such as Italy and France, could not be developed simply because there was a distinctive difference in both historical conditions and ideological trends.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, it also did not have any deterrent effect since 31 attacks were executed. Hence, the bill was abolished in 1993 by the socialists without being replaced by other legislation.

During the 1990s, no terrorist had been arrested, killed or injured in an operation or as a result of action by the security forces. However, there had been incidents in which the presence of the police made the attack impossible. With the help of the FBI and Scotland Yard, a think-tank and expert Greek security forces were created. Money and resources were allocated to them, but the frequent changes in their leadership (eight anti-terrorist branch chiefs between 1989 and 1998)<sup>61</sup> and constant shifts of policy and structure impeded the implementation of a cohesive and common approach to terrorist activity. However, the patterns of the attacks during the last decade, mainly low-level

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<sup>60</sup> Parliamentary Discussion Papers-Greek Parliament, 10 December 1990.

<sup>61</sup> George Kassimeris, *Europe's Last Red Terrorists: The Revolutionary Organization 17 November*, New York University Press, 2001, p. 196.

bombings and mortar attacks and only two gun-and-run attacks indicated operational decline. Likewise, the failure of ordnance indicates obsolete weaponry, a lack of funding, and an inability to penetrate police stations and army barracks in order to acquire new weaponry.

Since 2001, a new bill, an anti-terrorist law, has been in force. This law includes the protection of witnesses, their anonymity, name changes, or having their identities changed forever, favorable treatment or even exemption or release for anyone who provide valuable testimonies. Only those who have taken part in murders, robberies, and examination of bank accounts and DNA records are exempt. Due to this anti-terrorist law, the members of 17 N went to trial in February 2003.

To conclude, the Greeks never justified the actions of 17 N. Yet they never included in their statements even the possibility of negotiating a ceasefire with the group, or the use of armed forces or the establishment of an emergency status. As a result, Greece's anti-terrorist policy and planning had been characterized many times by incrementalism, fragmentation and ineptitude.<sup>62</sup>

Far from sending an early and clear message that violence would not be tolerated by taking a very clear stand against that phenomenon and effective measures, state authorities and political parties allowed terrorism to grow and to become a routine element of Greek contemporary life.<sup>63</sup> The lack of will, demonstrated by a few powerful groups in society and public apathy, had weakened the position of Greek society toward the terrorists. However, at that point, time was too short and the choices became fewer. The time had come to change the attitudes and behavior against terrorism, that salient violation of human rights and human values, which are the basis of democracy.

After September 11, 2001, a significant doctrinal change emerged in Greek political life and was tied to the responsibility of hosting the 2004 Olympics Games. Terrorism became one of the top priorities of the Greek agenda, and the defeat of 17 N became the first priority for the state. Fortunately, experts from the FBI and Scotland

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 198.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 198.

Yard were invited to Greece and were working alongside their Greek counterparts to bring the terrorists to a court of law. The hope was that this most promising cooperation would bring an end to the last active Greek terrorist group.

The role of the secret intelligence services, both domestic and foreign, was prominent in dealing with that plague that curse and their constant and effective efforts contributed greatly to the final solution as well as to the disruption of these terrorists groups. The intelligence services under a democratic regime that contributed enormously to that undeclared war along with the proper legal framework that protected their activities were the major reason for that success against terrorism. With important technical and advisory help from British and Americans intelligence services, Greece vanquished completely these terrorist groups and further consolidated Greek's democracy, always with the help from the political parties and from the Greek citizens.

## IV. INTELLIGENCE SERVICES IN GREECE IN THE POST-DICTATORIAL ERA

### A. INTRODUCTION

Greece, following the tragic dictatorship had an extremely difficult time transitioning, consolidating the democratic regime.

As Winston Churchill said in 1947:

Many forms of government have been tried and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect...indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government, except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.

Churchill's words were in one sense, prophetic. Democracy was and remains a difficult and demanding task. However, democracy has expanded "dramatically," since 1974 when the third wave of democratization began. Democracy expanded from 27 percent to approximately 61 percent of all nations during that period.<sup>64</sup> In all these countries, democracy became "the only game in town" through the arduous processes of transition and consolidation. Also, as J. J. Linz and A. Stepan claim:

A democratic transition is complete when sufficient agreement has been reached about political procedures to produce an elected government, when a government comes to power that is the direct result of a free and popular vote, when this government *de facto* has the authority to generate new politics, and when the executive, legislative and judicial power generated by the new democracy does not have to share power with other bodies *de jure*.<sup>65</sup>

Therefore, for a new democracy to succeed at consolidation, it must possess the following five interacting arenas in order: a free and lively civil society, a relatively autonomous political society, a rule of law, a usable state bureaucracy and an economic

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<sup>64</sup> Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy, Towards Consolidation*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, p. 24.

<sup>65</sup> Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p. 3.

society.<sup>66</sup> Specifically, concerning Greece, the fact that all the regime's crises did not lead to a major threat to democracy is an apparent sign that democratic consolidation in the country was completely successful.

Democracy is more than a regime, it is an interacting system in which no one arena of the previous five can function properly without support from the others. Also, one extremely important issue for that consolidation is the role and control of the intelligence community during the democratization period. The intelligence community played a crucial role during that time, but of course, most important was their role in bringing the Greek terrorist groups to justice.

The Greek democratic regime controls its intelligence community through a legal framework. About how that community contributes to the war against terrorists, it is necessary to understand the exact historical origin of the Greek secret intelligence services, and its mission in modern Greek democratic society. Moreover, the phases of the intelligence process that these intelligence services have adopted to function better, the structure and formation of the National Intelligence Service (NIS), and finally, the legal framework under which the NIS functions are important elements for the understanding of the Greek intelligence services, the crucial and significant contribution of the intelligence services against the terrorist groups in Greece after the dictatorship.

## **B. HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF THE INTELLIGENCE SERVICE**

The establishment of the Secret Intelligence Service in Greece began in 1926 when the first efforts were made to create this extremely sensitive service for the country's security. However, those attempts were not very productive and eventually the intelligence service was established in 1953, through the legislative decree 2421/1953,<sup>67</sup> under which the agency took the name Central Intelligence Service (KYP: Kentriki Ypiresia Pliroforion). The entire establishment was based on the standards of the Western Europe's intelligence services, and the primary goal was the national security concerning threats from the northern borders (communist countries) and from the eastern borders (Turkey), which was a constant threat to the country.

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p. 7.

<sup>67</sup> *History of the Greek National Intelligence Service*, Available at nis.gr.



Due to constant and different decrees at every turn, the Greek Secret Intelligence Services were subjected either to the Prime Minister or to the President of the Republic, and based on the last amendment; the agency is now subjected to the Prime Minister.

Currently, all functions of the agency follow a new law established in 1986, which is the legislative decree 1645/1986, and the agency was renamed. Instead of being called the Central Intelligence Service (KYP), it was now called the National Intelligence Service (EYP: Ethniki Ypiresia Pliroforion). It is a self-standing civil agency directly responsible to the Prime Minister. The political head of the agency is the Minister of Order.<sup>68</sup>

### **C. MISSION OF THE INTELLIGENCE SERVICE**

The country's national security is the main and most important mission of the National Intelligence Service (NIS). The objects and mission of the NIS, as included in the Law 1645/86, are<sup>69</sup>

- To collect, process, and disseminate intelligence with respect to the country's national security to the competent authorities.
- To confront the espionage activities implemented against the country by foreign intelligence officials.
- To coordinate, within the framework of decisions made by the National Security Council and the Prime Minister, the activities of all intelligence and security agencies of the state in the sector of collection and dissemination of information connected within the scope of its authority.
- To implement any other mission similar to the above-mentioned powers and that has been assigned to it by the National Security Council or the Prime Minister.

All the above goals and objects of the NIS included in the new law, which determines the operation of the intelligence service, are part of the intelligence process.

The term intelligence process refers to the various steps or stages in intelligence from politicians who need information about the society's final product. Intelligence products result from a series of interrelated activities, which constitute the intelligence

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> *Official Gazette of the Government of the Hellenic Democracy*, Law 1645, Article 2, Athens, 28 August 1986.

cycle. The seven main steps of the intelligence cycle that follow are the principal intelligence functions: requirements, collection, process and exploitation, analysis and production, dissemination, consumption and feedback.<sup>70</sup>

### **1. Requirements**

Each country has a variety of national security and foreign policy interests, and since that intelligence should be a supporter of policy and not a policy maker on its own, intelligence priorities must conform to the policy priorities.

### **2. Collection**

Collection is the exploitation of sources by collection agencies and the delivery of the information obtained to the appropriate processing unit for use in the production of intelligence.<sup>71</sup>

### **3. Process and Exploitation**

Process and exploitation is the phase before analysis, in which the intelligence personnel convert the collected information into a form suitable for analysis and production. This phase includes translation, decryption, interpretation and any other preparation needed for the information to be ready for the analysts.

### **4. Analysis and Production**

Analysis and production is the phase of the intelligence process involving the most difficult task during which intelligence information is subjected to systematic examination in order to identify significant facts, derive conclusions and prepare reports for the intelligence consumers.<sup>72</sup> As P. Gill states “It is at the analysis stage that “information” is converted into “intelligence.”<sup>73</sup>

### **5. Dissemination**

Dissemination is the third phase of the intelligence process. In this phase the final product of the intelligence process is distributed from the producers to the consumers, within and outside the intelligence community, in a suitable form.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Mark M. Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*, CQ Press, 2000, p. 40.

<sup>71</sup> United States Central Intelligence Agency, *A Consumer's Guide to Intelligence*, CIA Office of Public Affairs, 1999, p. 41.

<sup>72</sup> United States Central Intelligence Agency, pp. 41-47.

<sup>73</sup> Peter Gill, p. 179.

<sup>74</sup> United States Central Intelligence Agency, pp. 43-47.

## **6. Consumption**

According to many specialists, consumption, which is a new phase in the intelligence process, means how and in what degree the decision makers and policy makers take and use the intelligence issues.

## **7. Feedback**

Feedback, the other new element in the process, perhaps, is a very important and very vital phase. Feedback is the last phase in which the consumers of finished intelligence interact with the intelligence managers and help them evaluate the effectiveness of intelligence community support, identify the intelligence gaps, and focus more precisely on consumer needs.

## **D. STRUCTURE OF THE NIS**

Therefore, the coordination and cooperation of activities of all Security Agencies in Greece, with regards to the phases of collection and dissemination of information, as provided for by Article 2 of Law 1645/1986, is achieved through the following bodies:<sup>75</sup>

- The KYSEA (Foreign Affairs and Defense Government Council)
- The Intelligence Council
- The Joint Steering Committee

KYSEA, established in 1996 through a law, replaced the National Security Council (SEA). That new body retained all the powers of the previous organization and attributed extreme importance to the major guidelines of strategic importance concerning General Security and Public Policy Matters and to the guidelines on the implementation of decisions in the Ministries.<sup>76</sup>

The Intelligence Council exercises coordination within the framework of the decisions issued by the KYSEA and the Prime Minister as well as within the framework of the activities implemented by all the Intelligence and Security agencies of the state concerning the collection and dissemination of intelligence relating to the objectives for which the NIS is responsible.<sup>77</sup> This is accomplished with scheduled meetings of the Intelligence Council every two months, barring any emergencies.

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<sup>75</sup> *Mission of the Greek National Intelligence Service*, Available at [nis.gr](http://nis.gr).

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

The synthesis of the Intelligence Council is as follows:<sup>78</sup>

- The NIS's Director General as Chairman
- The Director of the Security Sector of the Ministry of Public Order
- The Director of the 2nd Joint Staff Group of the National Defense General Staff
- One appointed representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in addition to his alternate, by the Foreign Minister
- Up to two persons appointed as well as an equal number of alternates appointed by the Prime Minister according to the nature of the issues being discussed.

Finally, the Joint Steering Committee is responsible for conveying important proposals to the Intelligence Council and for checking and verifying the implementation of its decisions. The synthesis of that group is

- The Vice-Governor A' (of the NIS's Operations Sector)
- Representatives, according to each specific case, of the Ministry of National Defense, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Public Order and the appropriate State Agencies.
- One representative from each of the NIS's Department.

## **E. LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

The National Intelligence Service is under the close control and examination of:<sup>79</sup>

i) the Special Committee for the Protection of Communication Privacy (Law 2225/1994) of Parliament, which is responsible for protecting the secrecy of correspondence, for ensuring compliance with the conditions for decisions taken by the authorities to suspend the rule of secrecy only for a limited time, ii) the Institution for the Protection of Personal Data (Law 2472/10-4-1997), which refers to the protection of rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals and particularly to the protection of private life.

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> *Legal Framework of the Greek National Intelligence Service*, Available at nis.gr.

## **V. THE ROLE AND THE LESSONS OF INTELLIGENCE IN GREECE DURING THE WAR ON TERRORISM**

### **A. CONTROL AND OVERSIGHT OF THE INTELLIGENCE SERVICES**

Maintaining control and oversight of intelligence services is a paramount obligation of a government. To be sure, a delicate balance of power between the intelligence community and the government is imperative to safeguard a democracy from abuse. Juvenal's question, "Sed quis custodiet ipso custodies?" (But who will watch the watchdogs?) is as meaningful today as it was two thousand years ago. Controlling and overseeing intelligence agencies have worried democracies from their inception because oversight is necessary for the harmonious functioning of the state and the protection of its populace.

Greece struggled with this perplexing issue when its democracy was restored following the demise of its seven-year military dictatorship. Prior to the fall of the dictatorship, Greek's intelligence community was under the strict control of its dictator, Colonel George Papadopoulos. With the overthrow of his regime, Greek society was left suspicious and cynical of intelligence services. Cautiously, they began structuring a system of checks and balances that would suit a true democracy.

Generally, intelligence operations are kept secret from the general population. Often basic security requirements contradict the fundamental principles of an open, democratic, and representative government. Supposedly, the agencies within the intelligence community are acting according to the democratic rule of law and for the greater good of national security. Thus, to deter, the intelligence agencies from the temptation of exceeding their authority and to avoid any abuse of citizens, the governments attempt to control and to oversee the intelligence services. Consequently, a delicate balance exists between that oversight and the efficiency of the intelligence agencies. Any attempted reform should improve the intelligence system without compromising either oversight or efficiency. In other words, any reform should increase national security without increasing the danger of abuse of the law or of the citizens.

Almost every country's aspiration, ideally, is the creation of a nation-state, which will operate under democratic principles. This aspiration also includes the hope that the intelligence services will fully harmonize with these beliefs.

Whatever oversight structures are developed, the preconditions for them to have a genuine, rather than a purely symbolic impact, are adequate resources, including full access to information and the political will to use it. There are basic principles that must be accepted. First, both managerial control and external oversight are required at each level of the agencies. Second, the same positions should not be responsible for both control and oversight. Third, positions responsible for control of security intelligence agencies should draft standards and guidelines that will be public in so far as they are compatible with the essential security needs and will increase, in particular, the nearer the level of control is to the agency itself. Fourth, each control position will be accountable for or responsible to the next level moving away from the agency. Fifth, the primary role of each oversight institution will be to report to the control institution at the same level.<sup>80</sup>

Modern democracies use many techniques to control intelligence. Some of these techniques include the agency's structure, executive oversight, legislative oversight, judicial oversight and media and public awareness. The method used by the Greek government is likely the most effective technique for them. This "legislative method" possesses the best means of oversight. The Parliament with Parliamentary oversight of committees possesses numerous means to legislative oversight of intelligence services successfully, such as budget, hearings, nominations and treaties.<sup>81</sup>

Of course, extreme care should be given to the membership, powers and resources of those committees. Those committees must provide rigorous and intensive oversight and as such Parliament becomes a consistent player in shaping intelligence policy because when operating in secrecy, intelligence agencies are seen not simply as mysterious, but often as uncontrolled.

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<sup>80</sup> Peter Gill, *Policing Politics: Security Intelligence and the Liberal Democratic State*, CASS, 1994, p. 250.

<sup>81</sup> Mark M. Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*, CQ Press, 2000, p. 136.

Clearly, legislative oversight alone is not the perfect way to achieve accountability of the intelligence services, as even that method can raise a number of issues and problems that are difficult to solve. These issues are, for example, how much oversight is enough, as there is no objective way to decide the right level of oversight, how much money is enough for intelligence, whether or not it is proper to reveal intelligence to the public, and the amount of secrecy which is necessary during the oversight process.

However, as mentioned previously, legislative oversight has the means, the right and the obligation to supervise the intelligence services. As a result, this type of oversight is the most proper and the most efficient for that purpose.

## **B. THE ROLE OF INTELLIGENCE**

Generally, intelligence is defined as a process, a product and an organization. As a process, intelligence entails the acquisition and production of intelligence, as a product, the analyses, and as an organization, the agencies that carry out the intelligence functions.<sup>82</sup> Many people consider intelligence only in terms of military information, weapons capabilities, secret attack plans, and so forth, but while that part of intelligence is significant, it is not the exclusive part. Political intelligence, economic intelligence, social intelligence, environmental intelligence and cultural intelligence are also very important components.

Intelligence concerns issues related to national security. The pursuit of secret information is the mainstay of intelligence activity. Intelligence exists because governments try to hide information from other governments, which in turn, try to discover hidden information. It is important to distinguish between intelligence and information. Information is anything that can be known, regardless of how it may be discovered, while intelligence refers to information that meets the stated or understood needs of policy makers and has been collected, refined and narrowed to meet those needs.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

Thus, all intelligence is information, but not all information is intelligence. In an intelligence mission, the primary intelligence function is only to inform on policy and to support and help the decision-making process. Intelligence is used in making policy and not in implementing policy. Any other activity is either wasteful or illegal. As the authors of the *Federalist* wrote,

If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government, which is to be administrated by men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed and in the next place oblige it to control itself.<sup>84</sup>

It is necessary for the people to know what the actions of the government are, and with that knowledge, the citizens might be able to control all the secret actions because secrecy is the enemy of democracy. However, on the other hand, much intelligence is necessarily secret and cannot be shared with the people because the risk of disclosure of a secret increases with the number of people who know it.

All of these concepts had much to do with Greece because Greece was a new democracy in 1974, which tried to find the necessary strength to stand independently and overcome all the problems that the seven years of dictatorship had created. These problems, including terrorism, required intelligence far greater than ever before.

### **C. THE NEED FOR INTELLIGENCE**

To justify the need for intelligence in Greece and elsewhere, examining the threats and imminent hazards to the state and to the nation is extremely important because they can have direct consequences even to the existence of the country. Also, threats to national security, over a relatively brief span of time, degrade the quality of life for the inhabitants of a state, or significantly threaten to narrow the range of policy choices available to the government of a state or to private, non-governmental entities within the state.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Pat M. Holt, *Secret Intelligence and Public Policy: A Dilemma of Democracy*, CQ Press, 1995, p. 2.

<sup>85</sup> Peter Gill, p. 94.



According to Buzan, there are five main threats: military, political, societal, economic and ecological, and the main measure that defines them as issues of national security is their intensity.<sup>86</sup> Intensity would include the threat's specificity, its nearness in space and time, its probability, the weight of its consequences and whether or not perceptions of a particular threat are reinforced by previous experience. There is no distinction between foreign and domestic threats, but it is acceptable that political, societal and economic threats are more likely to characterize the main sources of a domestic threat. All these threats have, as a result, the demand for intelligence services capable of confronting them and protecting a country's interests with total success.

Therefore, intelligence is necessary for at least four major reasons.<sup>87</sup> First, to avoid strategic surprise, as the salient goal of any intelligence community, is to watch carefully threats, events and developments that have the ability and intent to harm the nation's existence.

Second, intelligence is also necessary because through intelligence, creating long-term expertise is easier, especially for national security issues in which a great deal of knowledge and experience exists in that community. A consensus on basic national interests and an enduring framework can be created so that even the short-term policies can be compatible. Third, intelligence is essential because it supports the policy process, as politicians always need timely intelligence, which will provide information and warning of risks and benefits for issues of national security. A fourth reason for intelligence is to maintain secrecy. Without such secrecy, nation's needs are always subject to breach of security. Secrecy makes intelligence special and unique for its services to society.

According to these four essentials, a huge difference does not exist between peacetime and wartime, and there is no clear distinction between those two periods for intelligence, even though many people believe there is. The material that will be gathered through intelligence process determine a country's stance on national security because the first purpose of the intelligence community is to protect the nation at all times.

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>87</sup> Mark M. Lowenthal, p. 2.

Especially concerning Greece, in 1974, when the situation was complicated by the emergence of terrorist groups, which increased domestic violence, the Intelligence Services, both domestic and foreign, had to play a major role in order to provide society with a solution.

#### **D. THE ROLE OF INTELLIGENCE AGAINST THE TERRORISTS**

Until the summer of 1974, for Greece's intelligence and the security services the main goal was to protect society from the communist threat. Although the first democratic government made numerous reforms after the dictatorship, the inadequacy of these reforms prompted no improvement. The intelligence services' methods, tactics and ethos remained almost identical as before.<sup>88</sup> They did not understand exactly what the terrorists wanted, their goals and their failure. The intelligence services did not understand in depth, the nature and the dynamics of the terrorists, a fact that contributed much to that tragic failure for too many years; a failure which had incalculable costs for the reputation and credibility of Greece throughout civilized society. Probably, with better cooperation and coordination among the government, the police, the judiciary and the intelligence services, the terrorists groups would have been more vulnerable and more easily identified and captured.

Furthermore, a large amount of money was spent on the security and intelligence services and a number of informers and agents. Yet, this did not reduce the terrorist attacks.<sup>89</sup> For those who knew more about these organizations, there were indications of corruption at every step. According to these people, it would have been better for the government to dissolve these services and establish totally new ones rather than to try to reform them, with measures, half measures and ideas that would be approved but would contain no power.

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<sup>88</sup> *To Vima* (Greek Newspaper), 5 July 1987.

<sup>89</sup> *Ependytis* (Greek Newspaper), 14-15 December 1996.

As a former governmental advisor on terrorism, Mary Bossis, had declared “Governments, both left and right, generally agreed that it was much safer to keep the secret services faction-riven, inefficient and dependant on political control and patronage than to modernize them into a powerful intelligence apparatus.”<sup>90</sup>

Moreover, various problems had emerged due to bureaucratic jealousies between and within different state agencies. These ranged from the lack of meritocracy in the Greek police, the low educational level of recruits, outdated training and the duplication of functions.<sup>91</sup> While absolute discipline and perfect operational performance were necessary to deal with armed and merciless terrorists, the security and intelligence services in Greece never showed these capabilities, and in many circumstances, they were exposed to public opinion along with the crucial mistakes made in their attempts to capture the terrorists.

One really remarkable attempt made by the Greek government in 1994 was the establishment of an anti-terrorist think tank, the Scientific Committee for the Analysis, Investigation and Planning against Organized Crime.<sup>92</sup> The main role of this think tank would be to provide, via research and information analysis, guidelines in terms of the appropriate policy the intelligence and security services should follow in order to get close to and eliminate the terrorists. That venture, completely supported by the United States, as the U.S. Diplomatic Security Service’s Anti-Terrorism Assistance Office, provided a great deal of advice about the operation of this think tank, as well as the development of a Greek-American Task Force against the terrorist groups.<sup>93</sup> However, and unfortunately for the country, this attempt turned out to be extremely short-lived, and the think tank was dissolved after just two years, and thus, one more attempt by the government was lost. In addition, as previously mentioned, numerous changes in the leadership of Greece’s law enforcement departments and agencies and continuous

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<sup>90</sup> George Kassimeris, *Europe’s Last Red Terrorists: The Revolutionary Organization 17 November*, New York University Press, 2001, p. 194.

<sup>91</sup> *Ta Nea* (Greek Newspaper), 15 February 1994.

<sup>92</sup> George Kassimeris, *Europe’s Last Red Terrorists: The Revolutionary Organization 17 November*, New York University Press, 2001, p. 196.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 197.

changes of policy, made the implementation of one concrete, permanent and strict approach to the problem almost impossible. For example, there were eight anti-terrorist branch chiefs between 1989 to 1998.

Therefore, even though a plethora of policies had been followed and various measures had been taken to confront the threat of terrorism, nothing had been achieved and all these attempts proved to be futile. The Greek authorities were no closer to one impending solution. Amazingly, not a single arrest of a member of the terrorist groups, or one discovery of a terrorist hideout occurred for more than twenty-five years. As a result, a general outcry rose among the Greek population as well as from the foreign countries there were friendly to Greece. The latter felt that their people were unprotected and prey to the hands and desires of a few merciless terrorists while according to these foreign countries, the official Greek government had no cohesive policy against terrorism.

The real breakthrough came, unfortunately, after another murderous attack, the attack against the British military attaché in Greece, Brigadier Stephen Saunders in June 2000. That murder was well prepared and planned and made clear that the terrorists had accurate information about the Brigadier's way of life. He paid with his life, according to them, for Greece' role in NATO's air strikes against the former Yugoslavia, even though the British Minister of Defense denied any connection between the Brigadier and the air strikes.

As the Greek Foreign Minister George Papandreou declared on CNN,

We are all much more dedicated and determined to eradicate this particular group which has continuously, over the last decades, been able to carry out acts of such sorts against both Greek and foreign targets. We are working very closely with the international community and of course, with the U.S. and Britain in this case to work and find the perpetrators and we will battle against them until we are successful.<sup>94</sup>

A report that had been issued just one week earlier, by a U.S. congressional commission, had designated Greece as "not cooperating fully" against terrorism, and

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<sup>94</sup> *Police Suspect Shadowy Leftist Group in Ambush that Killed British Diplomat*, June 8, 2000, Available at [cnn.com].

stated that “Greece has been disturbingly passive in response to terrorist attacks.”<sup>95</sup> Likewise, the U.S. State Department had described Greece as “one of the weakest links” in anti-terrorism efforts in Europe,<sup>96</sup> and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright told CNN, “the Clinton administration is pressing Greece to step-up their anti-terrorism efforts.”<sup>97</sup>

Apart from the international pressure on Greece to demonstrate progress against its native terrorism after all these attacks, another issue was also extremely important to the Greek government: the Olympic games of 2004. They would be the first Olympic games of the new century, and it had been decided that they would take place in their birthplace of Greece. Greece was concerned about the security of the Olympic Games because a terrorist attack would leave no margin of success. It would also irreparably destroy the image of the country abroad. Greece was interested in enhancing the benefits of the upcoming games, both politically and financially, and to prevent any criticism.

Greece, additionally, recalled vividly that their nation bordered extremely sensitive places such as the Middle East and North Africa, the memories of the 1972 Olympic Games, during which terrorist attacks occurred, and the events of September 11, 2001 and the instability that prevailed everywhere. Consequently, Greece considered the security and protection of the games very carefully.

Greece's previous failure to accept and to solve its terrorist problem had cost the country greatly. Greece's original proposal to host the Olympic Games budgeted \$5 million. This amount had to be changed often, and a minimum of \$600 million had been budgeted for security infrastructure and equipment, while the most modest estimates predict the cost may approach \$1 billion, and 45,000 full time uniformed personnel were designated for the security of the Olympics.<sup>98</sup> When comparing this to the Salt Lake City Olympic Games, whose costs in terms of security were \$300 million, the importance and

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<sup>95</sup> *U.S. Panel: Civil Liberties Not Jeopardized by Anti-Terrorism Recommendations*, June 5, 2000, Available at [cnn.com].

<sup>96</sup> *Greek Terror Group Says It Kill British Diplomat*, June 9, 2000, Available at [cnn.com].

<sup>97</sup> *U.S. Panel: Civil Liberties Not Jeopardized by Anti-Terrorism Recommendations*, June 5, 2000, available at [cnn.com].

<sup>98</sup> “Greece Playing It Safe with Olympics; Up to \$1 Billion to be Spent on Security at 2004 Summer Games,” *Washington Post*, January 04, 2003.

the significance that the Greek authorities had given to that issue becomes very clear. As the security consultant for Athens 2004, Peter Ryan mentioned, “the cooperation is vital and the intelligence community is really rediscovering itself in terms of international cooperation.”<sup>99</sup>

When combining all of these issues, it can be argued that the assassination of Brigadier Stephen Saunders and its timing seems to have been the last straw and was the crucial turning point that changed the overall Greek policy concerning terrorism. Simultaneously, the assassination caused the American and the British intelligence and security services to become directly involved in Greek political and social life by supporting the respective Greek authorities.

Facing the risk of being considered a dangerous country, Greece attempted to develop and demonstrate a policy that would protect the country from the possibility of such events occurring again. The international clamor that the Brigadier Stephen Saunders’ murder created made everyone in Greece demand more drastic and effective measures in the war with those criminals.

Therefore, with their intervention, British agents clearly stated that the best weapon against terrorism as well as the best counter terrorism weapon was intelligence, and good intelligence at that. Although the reactive investigations conducted after attacks are certainly useful, for crimes such as terrorism, the best tactics are preventive in order to be able to prevent the impending disaster, and not only to find out what exactly happened when everything is done.

Due to all these pressures, the Greek government eventually accepted foreign assistance in order to enhance its counter terrorism capabilities and operations after the murder of the British defense attaché, Brigadier Stephen Saunders. On June 6, 2000, the day Saunders was murdered, the British flew a team to Athens at the invitation of the Greek government, and they soon established a permanent base dedicated to assisting in solving the murder, an objective with potential international ramifications.<sup>100</sup> It was the first time that Scotland Yard had a permanent body of officers posted abroad.

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Constantine Buhayer, “The UK's Role in Boosting Greek Counter Terrorism Capabilities,” *Jane's Intelligence Review*, September 01, 2002.

Of course, many problems arose between the different services because Britain and Greece shared absolutely different political, judicial and constitutional cultures. This fact made the attempt at cooperation and coordination between them an achievement beyond any expectation. The previous example of the U.S. agents who had helped to train personnel suitable for anti-terrorist activities, who had offered intelligence and a great deal of advice on how to handle and solve the problem, and finally had faced only mistrust, suspicions and escalation of anti-American sentiments within the Greek government and in public opinion, resulted in the British agents paying more attention in order to avoid the same outcome.

The British agents provided the relevant Greek agents and police officers the equivalent of an advanced course in evidential standards, crime-scene management and discretion.<sup>101</sup> They offered them a different point of view, a different perception of the terrorists' attacks, their tactics, their real motivations, and the handling and examination of evidence. They tried to go more in-depth concerning the behavior of their members, their unique characteristics, always according to the records that they had gathered throughout the years and after so many murderous attacks. Further examination of all the terrorists' attacks from the beginning was an attempt to understand every detail, their techniques, their methods, and to discover new evidence that would lead to the elimination of the group. Finally, the British tried to offer a realistic theory to the Greeks about the reasons for the existence and continuity of that terrorist group.

The first step to full cooperation was a counter terrorism seminar that took place on July 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> just one month after Saunders' murder and included high-level UK security personnel and relevant Greek ministers, such as the Minister of Public Order, the Foreign Minister and the British Ambassador. UK police officers suggested the development of more sophisticated surveillance techniques and engagement as well as the use of the media in the battle against terrorism. The Greek government accepted and agreed to reorganize their security forces and to form a single anti-terrorist body following the UK example of the British CTPD.<sup>102</sup> Afterwards, the two countries

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<sup>101</sup> Constantine Buhayer, "Greek Tragedy," *The World Today*, April 2001, pp. 16-18.

<sup>102</sup> Tally Kritzman, *Greek Counter-Terrorism: Have the Lessons Been Learned?*, August 8, 2000, Available on [ict.org.il].

engaged in joint anti-terrorism exercises and mutual cooperation and coordination began, aided, to a large degree, by the previous and lengthy experience of the British forces in counter terrorism in Northern Ireland against the IRA.

Further recommendations about changes in the existing anti-terrorist law, in order to gain the support of the entire population in volunteering information to the police, to increase punishments for terrorism attacks, and to increase the authorities' independence<sup>103</sup> were completely adopted after the British exhortation.

The British authorities tried from the beginning to keep the Saunders spirit alive and to keep that murder a constant reminder for everyone, in order to lead British and Greek politicians, their acts and thoughts and also to act as a protective platform for victimized relatives and 17 N survivors to dare to speak out finally.<sup>104</sup> An entire publicity campaign was created, which included moments of silence, broadcasting anti-terrorism messages over the public communication networks and even the involvement of the Greek Orthodox Church and its traditions, services and its influence over the common people.

Additionally, Saunders' widow made a few appearances on television and tried to instigate the common sentiment, and asked for the help of the people against terrorism and their help in order to identify her husband's killers.

It is certain that the complete use of the mass media had several goals to fulfill, and it was a strategy that was followed on purpose by the Greek authorities under the counsels and the supervision of their British colleagues. The most important of these reasons were without a doubt the following:<sup>105</sup>

- To unite the Greek public against a common enemy
- To put pressure on the public to reveal any piece of information they might have
- To send a clear signal to the entire world, mainly the United States and the European Union, that Greece was determined to fight terrorism

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Constantine Buhayer, "The UK's Role in Boosting Greek Counter Terrorism Capabilities," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, September 01, 2002.

<sup>105</sup> Tally Kritzman, *Greek Counter-Terrorism: Have the Lessons Been Learned?*, August 8, 2000, Available at [ict.org.il].



- To clear the accusations levied about any possible involvement of a few politicians with the terrorist groups
- To send a clear message to the terrorists that they had no public support at all.

Eventually, in order to train the trainers and to convey all their professionalism and expertise, the UK officers held seminars with Greek colleagues, using whiteboards where, apparently for the first time, they talked about their concerns and marked out ideas for improving the Greek services. It is distinctive that Alan Fry, the head of the UK's anti-terrorist branch, emphasized the “willingness of the Greek authorities to have others scrutinize their previous work” and for “accepting criticism” was in part due to unprecedented pressure on the Greek state to act against terrorism.<sup>106</sup>

All the above measures, combined with the perfect cooperation and coordination between British and Greek agents of the intelligence and the security services, certainly helped enormously in apprehending the terrorist groups 17 N and ELA. It is more than certain that the training of the people in the anti-terrorist groups in Greece by their British and American colleagues mainly made them capable of using and exploiting even the minimum of the evidence that they found after a member of the group of 17 N detonated an explosive in Piraeus during the summer of 2002.

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<sup>106</sup> Constantine Buhayer, “The UK's Role in Boosting Greek Counter Terrorism Capabilities,” *Jane's Intelligence Review*, September 01, 2002.

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## **VI. CONCLUSION**

Undoubtedly, the terrorists never accomplished their ultimate goals: to gain popular support, to incite a revolution, and to force the state to change its foreign and domestic policies. Yet until all members of the organization have been arrested, it is highly likely that 17N will voluntarily abandon its campaign of violence.

No one can deny that a truly successful anti-terrorist policy is one that vastly reduces or eliminates the amount of violence. Fortunately, over the past years, the violence in Greece decreased, but contrary to the other Greek terrorist groups, 17 N still continues to murder even while in decline. This is true because small and extremely sophisticated nature of this particular terrorist group made it very difficult for the security services to infiltrate and defeat. When difficult economic measures were adopted and crises with Turkey occurred, 17 N only used these problems as an excuse to strike and raise the violence to a peak, even Greece's economic growth did little to reduce the level of violence.

Admirably, during the war against the terrorists, the Greek state overcame the temptation to restrict civil liberties and to transform the nation into an undemocratic police state. Likewise, in a democracy, statutory regulation of the media's coverage of terrorism is neither feasible nor desirable, so media self-restraint and self-resolution were the best policy options when the political elites were unable to agree on a common definition of political violence and the political environment became so polarized. This led to an incoherent approach to countering terrorism.

The Greek police and Greek intelligence services, with significant technical and advisory help from British and American colleagues, successfully regained some of their credibility after being purged in the aftermath of the military dictatorship. Similarly, the same success became obvious in Greek democracy, which gained credibility. The fact that multiple crises did not lead to a major threat to the democratic institutions could be judged as a sign of democratic consolidation and a sign of a healthy democracy within Greek society.

As the Foreign Minister George Papandreou declared:

The fall of November 17 is a turning point. It symbolizes the deep-rooted democratic institutions of the country, how much this group became isolated from society and public opinion. After the civil war and the military junta, the willingness of Greeks to cooperate with security and intelligence forces shows a mature democracy.<sup>107</sup>

Problems, which could have possibly materialized, especially in a new democracy because of the kind of intelligence services operations undertaken, hopefully will never become part of Greek's normal political life.

During the transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic regime, two functions of intelligence that are beyond its jurisdiction and legality, exist: counterintelligence and covert actions. These are extremely important and usually create many serious problems for democratic institutions concerning their legitimacy and abuse of civil rights. Greece's leadership, fortunately, in pursuing these terrorist groups exercised these options with virtually no abuse of democratic ideals.

"Counterintelligence" refers to efforts taken to protect one's country intelligence operations from penetration and disruption by hostile nations or by their intelligence services.<sup>108</sup> The other important function is "covert operations." Highly important and sensitive is the legitimacy of such operations and whether these operations should be assigned to intelligence services.

Covert operations are designed to produce a result in a foreign country secretly.<sup>109</sup> In general, there are three main categories of covert action. The first is propaganda that includes the unethical exercise of influence through the media to spread false rumors. The second is political action in which funding or other kinds of support to political parties, unions etc., take a significant and active role in a foreign country. The third, a paramilitary activity, includes the use of force and actions such as assassination or

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<sup>107</sup> Steven Erlanger, "Greece Hopes Arrests Earn it Europe's Embrace", *New York Times*, August 5, 2002.

<sup>108</sup> Mark M. Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*, CQ Press, 2000, p. 98.

<sup>109</sup> Pat M. Holt, *Secret Intelligence and Public Policy: A Dilemma of Democracy*, CQ Press, 1995, p. 135.

arming.<sup>110</sup> Wherever Greece employed its intelligence community to battle terrorism, it held firm to its democratic convictions. At no time did the government adopt totalitarian tactics.

Developing a professional and effective intelligence service and trying to avoid all the previous severe problems during their function requires a careful recruitment of staff, comprehensive and appropriate training, better organized personnel and procedures, greater specialization of functions, higher standards of discipline and significantly better pay<sup>111</sup> to attract higher educated and capable people and to avoid corruption.

It is certain that developing a professional, capable and democratically intelligence agency requires time and resources. Likewise, however, democratic development and consolidation requires time to be completed. Today, attempting to control the intelligence community in a country during a transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one is extremely arduous. Yet, if democratic ideas prevail, countries with a blotched past might move forward to a genuine form of democracy. Luckily, for Greece and for its democracy, the intelligence operations never transcended their legal or ethical boundaries at any time in Greece after the military dictatorship collapsed.

Consolidation demands more than a commitment to democracy in the sense that democracy is simply considered the best form of government, and it is necessary for all members of society to believe that their country's political system is worth obeying and defending.<sup>112</sup>

Theodore Couloumbis, a well-known political analyst, at the Athens University, said that all the events that happened in Greece from the summer of 2002 were a “sea of change,” a total change for the people. The Greek citizens have begun to believe in

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<sup>110</sup> Thomas Bruneau, p. 14.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>112</sup> Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy, Towards Consolidation*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, p. 66.

themselves and to view the country as a more modern European state, which crossed eventually and forever the threshold from an unstable democracy to a consolidated one.<sup>113</sup>

To conclude, the strategic priorities of the great powers are not those adopted from 1950 to 1990. The Cold War is moribund, and Greece is no longer a fragile democracy emerging from a seven-year dictatorship. Therefore, the Greek state and the political parties correctly adopted a clear sense of strategic priorities and a coherent approach to achieving the end of terrorism and prohibiting terrorism to become a routine element of the nation's life.

In this new environment, with the state's firm response, which has been implemented, and which combined the complete and appropriate cooperation and coordination of the government, the foreign and domestic intelligence and security forces, and the legislature, 17 N and ELA fortunately ceased to exist.

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<sup>113</sup> Steven Erlanger, "Greece Hopes Arrests Earn it Europe's Embrace," *New York Times*, August 5, 2002.

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